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Berrien County Gives Back

April 2017

TEAM Reaches Out

“That was fun! And... everyone got a prize!” Pine Ridge Rehabilitation and Nursing Center resident, Linda, really enjoyed spending time with TEAM (Teens Exhibiting Able Minds) members. TEAM, the Youth Advisory Committee for the Berrien Community Foundation, visited Pine Ridge for a night of fun and games. TEAM members had dinner with the residents and then hosted a special evening of Bingo!



The dining room was booming with laughter as TEAM members joined the Pine Ridge residents for a delicious dinner of grilled cheese and tomato soup. The teens spread out among the residents so that everyone could have someone to talk to. While enjoying background music from a live pianist,



the conversations flowed. TEAM Co-Chairperson, Allyson Olson said, “I wasn’t really expecting to connect and talk to the residents but they were all nice and easy to talk to. They had funny stories to tell and enjoyed our company like we did theirs.”

After dinner, it was time for Bingo - a VERY popular event at Pine Ridge. They play twice a week for “Bingo Bucks” that they eventually trade in for prizes once a month. Instead of Bingo Bucks, TEAM brought their own prizes including chocolate, coloring books, and comfy socks for the residents. The prizes were a big hit. “What a treat!” said resident, Helen, as she packed up her candy and coloring books to head back to her room.

TEAM is made up of high school students from throughout Berrien County. They meet monthly during the school year to network, perform service projects and recommend grants. The mission of TEAM is to empower youth to develop lifelong values of generosity, leadership, and volunteerism.

What's Coming Up In Grants at BCF?

It seems like there is ALWAYS an upcoming grant deadline at the Berrien Community Foundation! That is one of the reasons why we took the show on the road and met with non-profit organizations all over Berrien County. We made stops at libraries in Niles, New Buffalo, Berrien Springs, Coloma and St.



BCF Grants Officer Susan Matheny addresses a group of non-profit organizations during the BCF Grant Tour this spring.

Joseph to provide information and answer questions about grant opportunities through BCF. We also shared information about other local grant opportunities along with a few grant writing tips.

“The response to our ‘Grant Tour’ was really positive,” said BCF President Lisa Cripps-Downey. “It was good for us to go to all parts of Berrien County to make it easier for our non-profit organizations to visit with us. We met some wonderful people who are doing such great work in Berrien County.”

If you missed the ‘Grant Tour’ you can visit the BCF website at www.berriencommunity.org for more information on our upcoming grant opportunities or call (269) 983-3304.

UPCOMING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Stephen E. Upton Love Your Community Grant - Proposals due June 1.

More information at www.berriencommunity.org/lovecommunity. Open to non-profits, government agencies, schools and religious organizations.

William J. Deputy Grant for Harbor Country - Due June 5. Applications now open on the BCF Website www.berriencommunity.org/deputy. Open to Municipalities in Harbor Country.

Frederick S. Upton Foundation Summer Grant Cycle – Due June 15.

Applications are available by emailing uptonfoundation@berriencommunity.org. Open to non-profits, government agencies, schools and religious organizations.

Golden Acorn Classroom Mini-Grants – Due June 19, Applications now open on the BCF Website www.berriencommunity.org/gaclassroom. Open to teachers in Berrien County.

Berrien Community Foundation Competitive Grants – Due June 27.

Applications now open on the BCF Website www.berriencommunity.org/bcf-grants. Open to non-profits, government agencies and schools.

The Beauty of a Flower Cart

It started with a simple flower cart. Ted and Elaine Lucker had a flower cart in their front yard and all the proceeds from the sale of the flowers went to provide for the needs of children. After Elaine died, Ted Lucker wanted to make sure that there were always resources available for children in need.



He also realized that needs would change over time and trusted the Berrien Community Foundation to be forever involved and engaged with the community to help direct the funds. Ted worked with his attorney and named the Berrien Community Foundation as a beneficiary of a portion of his estate.

The Theodore & Elaine Lucker Endowment for Underprivileged Children will forever provide for children in need in Berrien County through a variety of programs. Berrien County is blessed to be the recipient of the love that flowed from the flower cart and Ted & Elaine Lucker.

Legacy Giving through the Berrien Community Foundation

“Everyone must leave something behind when he dies . . . Something your hand touched some way so your soul has somewhere to go when you die . . . It doesn’t matter what you do, so long as you change something from the way it was before you touched it into something that’s like you after you take your hands away.”

— Ray Bradbury, Fahrenheit 451

Whether it is through a tree we planted, a book we wrote, or a life we touched, we all are remembered for our acts. In that respect, perhaps the most important thing that you could do to create a lasting legacy in our community would be to include a provision in your Will directing a portion of your estate to an endowment to support the organizations and causes you love.

The Berrien Community Foundation can work with you to establish the directions for the fund during your lifetime. The life-end gift can be given as an endowment that provides funding every year to specific organizations or causes. The gift can also be divided so a portion is endowed and portions are distributed immediately or over time.

To learn more about making a legacy gift, please contact Lisa Cripps-Downey at the Berrien Community Foundation by calling 269.983.3486 or lisa@berriencommunity.org. The process is simple but the impact can change our community **For Good. For Ever.**

Giving a Little H.E.L.P.

The BCF Community Endowment is at the heart of many of the grants we are able to make. This vital endowment allows grants to a wide range of exciting programs throughout Berrien County. Last year, our volunteers approved a grant to give a little H.E.L.P. to Benton Harbor students through an army of Andrews University volunteers and the results were phenomenal!

The Human Empowerment Life Project (HELP) was created in 2015 to improve educational outcomes for Benton Harbor Area Schools students. This Andrews University volunteer organization was developed as a way for Andrews University students to give back to the community by helping elementary students



improve reading proficiency, promote student engagement, foster critical thinking, reinforce positive classroom behavior and achieve district wide MSTEP passing scores. The initiative includes **more than 200 Andrews University students, faculty and staff!**

HELP volunteers engage 2nd-4th graders on a weekly basis, providing mentoring during school hours. Volunteer mentors utilize weekly instructional materials which incorporate story-telling, repetition, role playing and modeling in an effort to not only improve students' academic outcomes and improve self-esteem, critical thinking and goal-setting skills in a fun and lively classroom atmosphere. "These kids have been eager to participate and are responding favorably to more challenging assignments," said program director Carlisle Sutton. Not only has this program helped the BHAS students on their way to success, it has also had a profound impact on the Andrews University team as the university students learn the value of volunteerism and community service.



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